Introduction to Public Relations – COMMUNICATION 178 revised 9/9/19

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**“We Are PR” Welcome to the Class!**

***Class Meetings: 11 a.m. to 12:15 p.m., Tuesdays & Thursdays, Edwards 235/Capen Auditorium***

This class is designed to motivate students—those planning to major in public relations as well as those from other majors—to value the process and philosophy of public relations helps organizations go from good to great. PR has many meaningful definitions, but do not get hung up on defining it: mostly, it’s the people business … “We are PR,” because public relations is how professionals can help clients change the attitudes and habits of audiences. Whether you plan to be a public relations professional or are wondering how PR can fit into your potential career plans, we hope you will enjoy the content, the speakers and your participation in the class. Students are invited to read this memo carefully and completely, retaining all information for the entire term. Our four-person instructional staff is dedicated to answering your questions and helping you along the way. Just because there are more than 100 students in the class does not mean each student’s needs are unimportant.

**Approach to Learning**

You may have heard the rumors … “attend, take notes and participate in class, and follow all directions on all assignments” and this class becomes much easier. Let me add two more important elements to help you succeed in this class:

* “Smart people ask questions …” if you don’t understand what is said in class, or what is written on your paper, ask a teaching staff member.
* “Professionals try to put learning in a context they can understand …” Don’t be afraid to try and use your own experiences and interests to interpret what is happening in the classroom (e.g., if you like theater, think about PR for theater; if you are a marketing major, relate the ideas to how PR supports marketing).

**About the Instructional Staff**

Instructor: Tom Lamonica (456 Fell Hall) ([talamon@ilstu.edu](mailto:talamon@ilstu.edu))

Office Hours: *2-4 p.m. Mondays & Wednesdays … 9-10:30 a.m. Tuesdays & Thursdays and by appointment.*

***NOTE: For best results, email Tom for an appointment in advance.***

Graduate Associate: Gabrielle Thompson (Fell 048) ([gjthom3@ilstu.edu](mailto:gjthom3@ilstu.edu))

Office Hours: *8-9 a.m. Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays and by appointment*

Student Assistants: Jennifer Ehresman ([jaehres@ilstu.edu](mailto:jaehres@ilstu.edu)) and Megan Pellock ([mepello@ilstu.edu](mailto:mepello@ilstu.edu))

***NOTE: Communicate with teaching assistants via email, before/after class, or by appointment.***

**Reading**

Although this class will focus primarily around the weekly lectures and discussion, the textbook and supplemental readings will play an integral role in understanding course concepts.

Text: **Public Relations** by Tom Kelleher (first edition); ISBN-13: 978-0190201470

Booklet: **Authenticity** by Golin Public Relations (emailed to you before class began. Email Tom if you did not receive it).

Other materials: Links & documents placed in ReggieNet, including “Read All About It” essays about classroom topics.

**Course Concepts**

**Mission** … This course “examines functions of public relations in society and surveys concepts, theories, ethics, and principles of effective public relations.” -- ISU Catalog

**Goals** … The course goals include:

• embracing the elements, activities, skills and concepts essential to the study of public relations;

• introducing the curriculum of studies for communication and public relations;

• promoting the practice and professionalism of public relations as a valuable and productive career choice;

• presenting public relations professionals to allow students to relate skills & concepts to active professional life

**Professionalism = Preparation + Participation** … Being a professional means being prepared to actively participate in your educational experience. For most young people, going from being a student to a professional is an exciting and rewarding experience that involves seizing opportunity and accepting responsibility for your own learning, your own productivity, your own success. The personal rewards cannot be measured in terms of anything more than how it feels to have control of your own life, your own future. In order to understand public relations, students are encouraged to read and be familiar with assigned chapters from the textbook as noted on the schedule, plus other readings as provided by the teaching staff. Attendance is not a component of evaluation for class members, but we will take attendance for informational purposes. Being responsible is essential to success … in this class, and in your life! ***The instructor reserves the right to either decline to accept late work, or give a reduced grade for late work, at his discretion.***

**Student Objections** … Students who have a problem with accepting or complying with the requirements of the course or assignments as stated here, or with accepting the consequences of action or inaction in this document, must present their objections, and the reasons for them, in writing, before the start of the 6th class period of the semester. Efforts will be made to accommodate students with legitimate concerns or conflicts with assignments and due dates. Following the start of the 6th class period of the semester, it will be assumed by the instructor that students have read the entire syllabus and agree to its terms.

**The Classroom as Meeting Place** … Professionalism can only happen in the classroom if participants act professionally. In this situation, we ask that you conclude all cell phone conversations & texts, and remove all ear buds before entering. Instead of staying inside yourself, reach out to others inside the classroom. Of course, you may use a device to take notes, but, please, don’t use a class meeting to text or tweet.

**Get Involved Project** …Designed to promote pre-professional and/or civic involvement by students on, or around, their campus … see full assignment description below.

**Examinations** …In an effort to help students understand and retain key concepts, three objective examinations (using opscan answer sheets) will provide a significant part of the evaluation for grades in this class. Each examination will be worth progressively more points (80-first; 100-second; 120-third) so that students have the opportunity to take advantage of accumulated knowledge throughout the class—and their own interest in improving. Questions will be based upon all aspects of in-class work and presentations as well as readings from the text. While we do not provide a “study guide,” we will make teaching staff available for a review session for each exam (the first two exam reviews will take place at a time and place outside the regular class schedule). Students MAY write on the examination question document, but will NOT be permitted to take that document out of the classroom on exam day. Punctuality is required. Students arriving more than 20 minutes after the scheduled start of any exam WILL NOT be allowed to take the scheduled exam. Makeup exams are not offered unless arrangements are completed with the instructor in advance of the scheduled exam start time.  ***(NOTE on FINAL exam conflicts: All requests for alternate final exam times must be submitted by 11 a.m., Tuesday, Nov. 12. Later requests will not be considered. “Alternate” final exams for COM 178 are scheduled at 3 p.m. on the last day of Finals Week.)***

**Learning from the Exams** …Students who wish to have a personalized review of their own exam (for exams #1 and #2) must make an appointment to meet with the instructor (or designated teaching staff member) within 10 days following the exam date.

**Grading: Quality Writing Counts/Rubric Baselines** …Following directions in every assignment is essential to learning. All written work will be reviewed for grammar, spelling, punctuation, usage and other writing skills. In public relations, an idea or a message is only as good as the professional’s ability to express it. The creative aspect of public relations is important, so grading rubrics will not begin at 100 percent and regress; they will begin at 90 percent for large assignments, 80 percent for extra credit, to allow for creativity to be rewarded with a higher score.

**Your Work Reviewed & Returned** …The teaching staff takes pride in carefully reviewing all written work submitted by students, making comments and suggestions for improvement on the work. Students are expected to reclaim their graded work in a timely manner after grading is completed. Graded work will always be displayed on the stage at the front of the classroom and students are expected to retrieve their papers as soon as they become available. ***Student work, either required or extra credit, could be subject to a reduced grade if not retrieved within one week after it is first made available at class.*** Your graded work becomes less valuable the more time passes between when it is reviewed by teaching staff and when you see it.

**Attendance Policy** …The teaching staff assumes that, as adults, students can make their own decisions and set their own priorities—including attending class. In each class (except exam days), sign-in sheets will be circulated for students to sign their

own names as having attended class. Student grades are NOT impacted directly by attendance—however, students who are absent are EXPECTED to connect with student colleagues (NOT teaching staff members) to obtain all information and instruction supplied in class. Since you are responsible for all material covered in each class, it is a good idea to connect with fellow students from whom you can receive notes if you have a legitimate conflict. Written extra credit opportunities will be distributed ONLY to students in attendance on the day the assignment is presented (see **Written Extra Credit** section below for details).

**Extra Credit**

**Written Extra Credit** …Extra credit opportunities will not be announced to students in advance. *Only those students in attendance before 11 a.m. on the day the extra credit project is announced in class* will be eligible for the extra credit. Students may also propose an ‘extra credit’ projects of their own design. Student-proposed extra credit projects must be submitted to the instructor in writing for approval. Student-proposed extra credit projects will not be accepted for approval after 11 a.m. Oct. 31 and all student-proposed extra credit work must be submitted by 11 a.m., Nov. 14. The purpose and process of Written Extra Credit assignments is stated below.

* Discover and write about a topic that demonstrates you understand something about the process and/or practice of public relations.
* Perform some research (although we do not require footnotes) about the topic that gives you insight beyond the classroom and what is taught in COM 178.
* Follow directions and write (a short paper) something that is interesting, clear, concise and creative.
* Develop proofreading and editing support from parents, peers and/or professionals.
* Learn to identify, specifically, elements of the assignment by name and organize their thoughts with intelligence and perspective.
* Make your work “portfolio quality” (i.e., what you would show to a prospective employer).

**Class Participation Extra Credit/Personal Response** …Student participation in class adds to the learning and understanding of all class members, and offering extra credit is a way to open participation to all students. Each time a discussion issue is presented, and/or a question is asked, students may elect to participate and receive from 0-3 points of extra credit per participation (limited to the FIRST participation in any class session … second and subsequent participations in the same class session are not graded):

* After being acknowledged by a teaching staff member/guest lecturer, the student class participant should rise at his/her spot in class and clearly state his/her name before responding.
* Responses will be evaluated for credit by a teaching staff member and posted under ‘participation’ on Blackboard at the end of each month.

**Course Information**

**Evaluation & Grades**

Item Total Pts.

* Get Involved Report 100
* Examinations (x 3) 300

**TOTAL Points 400**

Extra Credit (optional)

* Written Extra Credit 3 (maximum 10 pts. Each—see above)
* Class Participation E.C. (see guidelines above)
* My Values Extra Credit maximum 10 points

Final Grades determined by percentage scale (90% +plus= A, 80-89% = B, 70-79% = C, 60-69% = D, less than 60% = F). .

**Honors Program** … Honors Program students are encouraged to propose and create projects which suit their own communication interests to fulfill honors requirements during this class. See the instructor for details. Be prepared to discover what YOU want to learn more about in communication and public relations.

**Plagiarism** … (university statement): “Plagiarism is not tolerated by the instructor, the school, the college and or the university. Copying another’s work on an examination, assignment or project could result in a grade of “F” for the semester and the students involved facing sanctions from the university for academic dishonesty, which could result in dismissal from the university.”

**Accommodations** … Any student needing to arrange a reasonable accommodation for a documented disability and/or medical/mental health condition should contact Student Access & Accommodation Services at 350 Fell Hall, (309) 438-5853, or visit the StudentAccess.IllinoisState.edu. ALSO, student-parents with child-care challenges are encouraged to BRING THEIR YOUNGSTERS TO CLASS! Every child grows up better with a better-educated mom or dad! This includes YOURS ☺!

**Assistance** … No public relations professional can handle every situation and every crisis alone. College students are the same as PR professionals and should look at life the same way. College life can be stressful and, at times, feel overwhelming. The COM 178 instructional staff wants its students to feel GOOD about being students. We encourage students dealing with loss, uncertainty, personal or emotional problems to contact Student Counseling Services at 309.438.3655. The help you may need is FREE and COMPLETELY CONFIDENTIAL.

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|  |  | COM 178/Introduction to Public Relations | | Fall 2019 |
|  |  | *Tom Lamonica, instructor* | ***9/9/2019*** | Edwards 235/Capen Auditorium (Tuesday, Thursday -- 11 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.) |
|  |  | *Graduate Assistant: Gabrielle Thompson* | *Undergraduate Assistants: Jennifer Ehresman & Megan Pellock* | |
| No. | Date | Topic | Activity/Guests | **Readings/Assignments (for future classes, next class)** |
| 1 | **20-Aug** | **Introduction/Elevator Pitches** |  |  |
| 2 | **22-Aug** | **Elevator Pitch** | **Get Involved Explained (Tom)** | **Get Involved Proposal (20) due Sept. 10 …** |
| 3 | **27-Aug** | **Elevator Presentations** |  | **PR by TK, Chapter 4** |
| 4 | **29-Aug** | **Publics & Pitching** |  | **PR by TK, Chapters 2 & 3** |
| 5 | **3-Sep** | **Historic Figures in PR** | ***My Values Explained (Tom)*** |  |
| 6 | **5-Sep** | **Public Relations & Related Fields** | ***PRSSA Presentation (Megan)*** | **PR by TK, Chapter 14 (355-361) Get Involved Proposal (20) due Sept. 10** |
| 7 | **10-Sep** | **Practice styles … PR Majors Only** | ***PR majors only (Megan & Jen)*** |  |
| 8 | **12-Sep** | **Practice Styles: Agency** | ***Jess Konstantelos & Brian Campbell, Fishman PR*** |  |
| 9 | **17-Sep** | **Practice Styles: Corporate** | ***Kim Harken & Jamie Fox, Caterpillar*** |  |
| 10 | **19-Sep** | **Practice Styles: Institutional** | ***Rachel Kobus & Dani Schroeder, University Advancement*** |  |
| 11 | **24-Sep** | **Exam #1** | **80 points** | **PR by TK, Chapter 9** |
| 12 | **26-Sep** | **Writing** |  | **My values proposals due Oct. 3** |
| 13 | **1-Oct** | **SCP: Mission & Vision, Goals** |  | **PR by TK, Chapter 5** |
| 14 | **3-Oct** | **SCP Objectives & Strategy** |  | **PR by TK, Chapter 6-7** |
| 15 | **8-Oct** | **SCP: Tactics & Execution** |  | **PR by TK, Chapter 8** |
| 16 | **10-Oct** | **SCP: Evaluation** |  | **Authenticity Booklet (pdf)** |
| 18 | **15-Oct** | **Advertising** | ***Dr. Rebecca Hayes, Associate Professor*** |  |
| 19 | **17-Oct** | **Authenticity** |  |  |
| 20 | **22-Oct** | **Authenticity** |  | **Get Involved Project Due Nov. 5 (80)… PR by TK, Chapter 14 (361-end)** |
| 20 | **24-Oct** | **Sports, Entertainment & Tourism** | ***Tom Sheridan, sports executive*** |  |
| 21 | **29-Oct** | **Exam #2** | **100 points** |  |
| 22 | **31-Oct** | **Perception: Identity** |  | **Get Involved Project Due Nov. 5 (80)** |
| 23 | **5-Nov** | **Perception: Image** |  |  |
| 24 | **7-Nov** | **Perception: Reputation** |  |  |
| 25 | **12-Nov** | **Message Composition** |  |  |
| 26 | **14-Nov** | **Message Composition** | ***Melissa Libert, development director, SoC*** |  |
| 27 | **19-Nov** | **Media Relations** |  |  |
| 28 | **21-Nov** | **Programs & Campaigns** |  | **PR by TK, Chapter 10** |
| 29 | **3-Dec** | **Digital & Social Media** | ***Dillon Maher, Communication Specialist, ISU Admissions*** |  |
| 30 | **5-Dec** | **Review** |  |  |
| 31 | **tba** | **Exam #3 (time tba)** | **120 points** |  |
| No. | Date | Topic | Activity/Guests | **Readings/Assignments (for future classes, next class)** |